

traffic" over five months in the year. The local traffic of the interior would likewise be suspended for long periods, and at such times the country and its inhabitants would be as much isolated as they are now. In a military view alone this objection would prove fatal to any permanent route of an amphibious character; and it is probably on this ground, together with the fact that the water lines pass for a considerable way along the international boundary, that the two military gentlemen last named have extended their advocacy to a line of communication wholly by land through the interior.

A railway communication on the other hand would be the shortest practicable line that the physical features of the country would admit,—it would have no transshipments between tide water on the two oceans,—it would in most instances be carried through the heart of the country at some distance from lakes and rivers, and would thus open valuable tracts of land for colonization which could not be reached by navigable waters; when it touched or intersected water channels, these would form natural branches to it, and be available to their fullest extent in laying open the land along their banks for settlement. It would, as an essential and independent part of its equipment, be provided with an electric telegraph; the telegraph, as on other lines, would be available for purposes beyond the immediate requirements of the railway, and without doubt great benefits would result from the possession of this instantaneous means of communication.* The railway would throughout the year

* A telegraph would be much more expensive in the first place, and almost impossible to maintain on any line across the country other than a railway or other travelled land route, if carried around lakes or through hundreds of miles of uncleared forest, the wires would constantly be broken by fallen timber, and the posts frequently destroyed by running fires, inconvenient interruptions might thus occur when the telegraph was most in need. On a railway it is part of the duty of the trackmen to look out for fallen trees, and a break is thus speedily repaired when it occurs: when the line is cleared to a sufficient width interruptions from this cause are not frequent.